

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 13, 2005. Claims 1 to 5, 7 to 16, 18 to 30, 32 to 41, 43 to 51 and 53 to 56 remain pending in the application, with Claims 6, 17, 31, 42 and 52 having been cancelled herein. Claims 1, 11, 22 to 26, 36, 47 and 56 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 56 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,909,602 (Nakai). The rejections are respectfully traversed and the Examiner is requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in light of the following comments.

The present invention relates to, for example, a computer that receives image data from one of various scanners and then decides which one of various printers the data is to be sent to for printing. More specifically, the computer receives data from the scanners and printers indicating whether they have a forgery-preventing function. The data is also received, in one embodiment, whenever one of the scanners or printers is changed. The received data on the forgery-preventing function of the devices is then used to generate a device information table. Then, when a scanner inputs data and provides the data to the computer, the computer can refer to the table to determine whether or not the scanner that read the image has the forgery-preventing function by referring to the table. If not, then the computer can select a printer that does have the forgery-preventing function to send the image data to for printing. As a result, even though a scanner may not have the forgery-preventing function, the computer can select an appropriate printer so as to prevent forgery.

Referring specifically to the claims, Claim 1 is an image processing apparatus comprising first receiving means that receives information from a first scanning

apparatus indicating the presence of a forgery-preventing function in the first scanning apparatus, and receiving information from a second scanning apparatus indicating the absence of a forgery-preventing function in the second scanning apparatus, second receiving means that receives information from a first printing apparatus indicating the presence of a forgery-preventing function in the first printing apparatus, and receiving information from a second printing apparatus indicating the absence of a forgery-preventing function in the second printing apparatus, generating means that generates a device information table on the basis of the information received by the first receiving means and the information received by the second receiving means, and controlling means that controls which printer is to print image data received from one of the first or second scanning apparatuses based on the device information table generated by the generating means, wherein the first receiving means and the second receiving means receive information indicative of the presence or absence of a forgery-preventing function when at least one of the first and second scanning apparatuses and the first and second printing apparatuses is changed.

Claims 22 and 23 are method and computer program claims, respectively, that substantially corresponds to Claim 1. Claim 26 also substantially corresponds to Claim 1, but is written in non-means-plus-function form.

Claim 47 also includes features along the lines of Claim 1, but is more specifically directed to an image processing apparatus that communicates with one or more image reading devices and one or more image output devices, comprising first receiving means that receives information indicating whether or not a device has a forgery-preventing function from each of the one or more image reading devices and each

of the one or more image output devices, generating means for generating a device information table on the basis of the information on the one or more image reading devices and the information on the one or more image output devices received by the first receiving means, second receiving means that receives image data read by one of the one or more image reading devices, judging means that judges whether or not the image reading device that reads the image data includes a forgery-preventing function from the forgery-preventing function information of the image reading device received by the first receiving means, and controlling means that controls where the image data received by the second receiving means is to be output to in order to output the image data to an appropriate image output device based on a judged result of the judging means and the device information table generated by the generating means, wherein the first receiving means receives the information indicating whether or not the device has the forgery-preventing function when at least one of the image reading devices and the image output devices is changed.

Claim 56 is a method claim that substantially corresponds to Claim 47.

Claim 11 includes features similar to Claim 1, but is more specifically directed to a user selecting a printer. Thus, Claim 11 is an image processing apparatus, comprising first receiving means that receives information from a first scanning apparatus indicating the presence of a forgery-preventing function in the first scanning apparatus, and receiving information from a second scanning apparatus indicating the absence of a forgery-preventing function in the second scanning apparatus, second receiving means that receives information from a first printing apparatus indicating the presence of a forgery-preventing function in the first printing apparatus, and receiving information from a second printing apparatus indicating the absence of a forgery-preventing function in the

second printing apparatus, generating means that generates a device information table on the basis of the information received by the first receiving means and the information received by the second receiving means, inputting means that inputs information related to a selected scanner apparatus for image scanning, and notifying means that notifies a user, based on the information received by the first receiving means, the information received by the second receiving means, information stored in the device information table, and the information input by the input means, of at least one available printing apparatus for which image data can be sent to for printing, wherein the first receiving means and the second receiving means receive information indicative of the presence or absence of a forgery-preventing function when at least one of the first and second scanning apparatuses and the first and second printing apparatuses is changed.

Claims 24 and 25 are method and computer program claims, respectively, that substantially corresponds to Claim 11. Additionally, Claim 36 substantially corresponds to Claim 11, but is written in non-means-plus function form.

The applied art of Nakai is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the present invention, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of an information processing apparatus having a first receiving means that receives information from a first scanning apparatus indicating the presence of a forgery-preventing function in the first scanning apparatus, and that receives information from a second scanning apparatus indicating the absence of a forgery-preventing function in the scanning apparatus, a second receiving means that receives information from a first printing apparatus indicating the presence of a forgery-preventing function in the first printing apparatus, and that receives information from a second printing apparatus indicating the

absence of a forgery-preventing function in the second printing apparatus, and that then generates a device information table based on the received forgery-preventing function information of the first and second scanning apparatuses and the first and second printing apparatuses. Therefore, Nakai also does not teach the feature of receiving the forgery-preventing information when at least one of the first and second scanning apparatuses and the first and second printing apparatuses is changed.

Nakai discloses a system of copying machines that transmit image data amongst themselves. Specifically, when an image is scanned by one copying machine, and if it does not have a specimen image judging section, it transmits the scanned-in image data to another copying machine that does have the specimen image judging section. The second copying machine then processes the specimen to determine whether or not the scanned image is copy prohibited. If so, the second machine prohibits the copying. However, if the image is not copy prohibited, then the second machine informs the first machine of the result. If the image is not copy prohibited, the first machine prints out the image. As an additional feature, if the second machine determines that the image data can be copied, but has an image density that can not be handled by the first machine, it may then transmit the image data to a third machine that has a higher image resolution printing ability so that the image data can be printed out. Applicant simply fails to see any disclosure in Nakai in which any one of the copying machines described therein has the claimed receiving means that receives the forgery-preventing function information from the other devices and then generates the device information table from that information.

In view of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, each of independent

Claims 1, 11, 22 to 26, 36, 47 and 56 are not believed to be anticipated by Nakai and therefore, are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Edward Kmett/

Attorney for Applicant
Edward A. Kmett
Registration No.: 42,476

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-2200
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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